extracted by squeezing the comb with the hand. Wax is obtained by placing the comb in boiling water and allowing it to cool, when the wax floats to the surface. The Khasis do not systematically tend their bees, as they do not understand how to prevent swarming, and as the Khasi bee is a prolific swarmer, hives become weak very soon and a new hive has to be started from a captured natural swarm. The villages in which bees are regularly kept to any large extent in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills are Thied-dieng, Mawphoo, Nongwar, Mawlong, Pyuter, Tyrna, and Kongthong, but most of the Wár villagers rear bees and sell the honey at the neighbouring markets. The collection of the honey of the wild bee, or u *lywai*, is a hazardous occupation, the services of some six or seven persons being required, as the combs of this bee are generally built in the crevices of precipitous rocks, and sometimes weigh more than half a maund each. When such hives are discovered the bees are driven out by the smoke of a smouldering fire lit at the foot of the rock below the hive. Two or three men get to the top of the precipice, leaving two or three of their companions at the base. One of the men on the top of the rock is then lowered down in a sling tied to a strong rope, which is made fast by his companions above to a tree or boulder. The man in the sling is supplied with material to light a torch which gives out a thick smoke, with the aid of which the bees are expelled. The man then cuts out the comb, which he places in a leather basket or bag, which, when filled, he lowers down to the persons in waiting at the foot of the rock. The wild honey may be distinguished from that of the domestic bee by being of a reddish colour. Honey from the last-mentioned bee is gathered twice or thrice in the year, once in the autumn and once or twice in the spring; that gathered in early spring is not so matured as that collected in autumn. The flora of the Khasi Hills being so numerous, there is no necessity for providing bees with artificial food. The bees are generally able to obtain their sustenance from clover, anemonies, "golden rod," bush honeysuckle, and numerous shrubs such as andromeda, daphne, &c., which abound about Shillong. There seem to be facilities for apiculture on a large scale in these hills, and certainly the honey which is brought round by the Khasis for sale in

Shillong is excellent, the flavour being quite as good as that of English honey. Under "Miscellaneous Customs connected with Death" will be found a reference to the statement that the dead bodies of Siems used to be embalmed in honey. The existence of the custom is generally denied by Khasis, but its former prevalence is probable, as several trustworthy authors have quoted it.

HOUSES.

The houses of the people are cleaner than might be supposed after taking into consideration the dirtiness of the clothes and persons of those who inhabit them. They are as a rule substantial thatched cottages with plank or stone walls, and raised on a plinth some 2 to 3 ft. from the ground. The only window is a small opening on one side of the house, which admits but a dim light into the smoke-begrimed interior. The beams are so low that it is impossible for a person of ordinary stature to stand erect within. The fire is always burning on an earthen or stone hearth in the centre. There is no chimney, the smoke finding its exit as best it can. The firewood is placed to dry on a swinging frame above the hearth. In the porch are stacked fuel and odds and ends. The pigs and calves are generally kept in little houses just outside the main building. The Khasi house is oval-shaped, and is divided into three rooms, a porch, a centre room, and a retiring-room.

In olden days the Khasis considered nails *nang*, or taboo, and only used a certain kind of timber for the timber which surrounds the hearth; but they are not so particular now-a-days. In Mawkhar, Cherrapunji, and other large villages, the walls of houses are generally of stone. In Cherrapunji the houses are frequently large, but the largest house I have seen in the hills is that of the Dolui of Suhtnga in the Jaintia Hills, which measures 74 ft. in length. The house of the Siem Priestess at Smit in the Khasi Hills is another large one, being 61 ft. long by 30 ft. broad. In front of the Khasi house is a little open-fronted in on two sides, but open towards the village street. The

and placed in the hollowed-out trunk of a tree, *ka-shyopoid*, there being a small hole with a plug at the bottom of this receptacle. Spirit is then poured into the *shyopoid* until the whole body is immersed, the liquor being allowed to stand for three days. After the body has been thus steeped, the liquor is allowed to run out, and the body is washed with warm water, after which it is allowed to dry for a day. Then a quantity of lime-juice is poured in, the latter being obtained from the fresh fruit of the lime (*u soh jew*). The body is thus exposed to a process of pickling, which continues until the whole is thoroughly dry and becomes like that of a mummy. It is then placed in a coffin, which is kept in the house of the Siem family until it is time to perform the funeral obsequies. These ceremonies entail a very large amount of expense, and it sometimes happens that they cannot be completed for some years after the death of a Siem. The body of a deceased Siem according to the Cherra custom should be burnt by his successor; otherwise the latter is not Siem according to the Khasi religion. The last Siem of Cherra, U Hajon Manik, did not perform the funeral obsequies of his predecessor U Ram Singh, and it is stated that many of his subjects did not regard him as Siem, according to the Khasi religion, in consequence. There are at the present time the corpses of two Siems of Cherra which have been preserved in the manner described above, awaiting cremation. The first Siem, U Ram Singh, died so far back as 1873, and the second, U Hajon Manik, died in 1901.

Sir Joseph Hooker and other authorities have stated that the bodies of deceased Siems of Cherra used to be embalmed in honey, and an amusing story is told regarding the necessity of exercising caution in purchasing honey from Cherra (honey being plentiful in this neighbourhood), except in the comb, for fear of honey which has been used for embalming purposes being passed off on the unwary purchaser. But the members of the Siem family and the old residents deny that honey is used for this purpose nowadays, possibly in the interests of the trade. It is, however, not unlikely that honey was so utilized in days gone by, as it is a well-known agent for embalming. The bodies of priests in Burmah are said to be embalmed in honey, *vide* Yule's "Embassy to Ava."